

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Executive Registry

85- 3092 ✓

6 August 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: C/ACIS/DI  
FROM: DCI  
SUBJECT: Risk Reduction Centers

This is okay with me.



William J. Casey

Attachment:  
Memo to DCI/DDCI/DDI,  
dtd 5 August 85, Same  
Subject as above

Dist:  
orig - addressee  
1 - DDI  
1 - DCI  
1 - DDCI  
1 - ER File



ACIS - 1365/85  
5 August 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM:

[Redacted]

Chief, Arms Control Intelligence Staff

25X1

SUBJECT: Risk Reduction Centers

1. This "fast-track" memorandum is for your information unless, upon reading this text, you care to issue guidance. (U)

2. The issue is what to do about the concept of US/Soviet Risk Reduction Centers (RRCs). The Executive Branch has been quietly studying this issue for a number of months. Senators Nunn and Warner (and perhaps a few others) have been pushing this idea with steadily increasing force. Their staff officers and working level officers in the Executive Branch have been discussing the topic jointly for the last month or so in order to find out exactly what the Senators have in mind and what is feasible. (C/NF)

3. The issue is now moving quickly towards to the President's desk. The two Senators reportedly want to discuss this topic with the Soviet leadership during a trip to Moscow later in August. During a meeting of the Senior Arms Control Group (SACG) about a week and one-half ago, Mr. McFarlane told the group that the issue paper in the Executive Branch needed to be finished quickly and sent forward. Bud said the President was becoming politically exposed. My guess is that this exposure amounts to pressure from the Senators and the absence so far of a clear Administration position. (S/NF)

4. The issue paper has been completed at the Interdepartmental Group-level and is enroute now to a meeting of the SACG on Wednesday. A copy of the paper is attached for such background review as you may care to do. The paper is relatively easy to read. The questions for decision are:

-- Page 2: Should the policy on RRCs be made now?

-- Page 4: If the Administration decides against postponing a decision, should it support the Senator's RRC concept, develop a more modest alternative, or distance itself from the concept?

[Redacted]

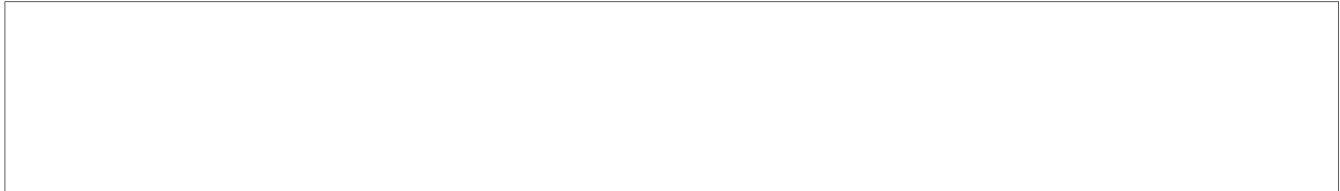
25X1

SECRET//NOFORN



-- Page 9: How should the Administration implement its decision?

Decision blocks are scattered throughout the paper. (S/NF)



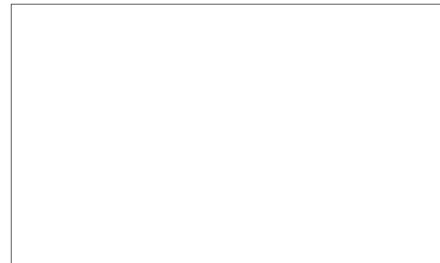
25X1

6. Based on the comments at the IG, all policy agencies oppose establishment of RRCs as envisaged by these Senators. (S/NF)



25X1

8. I hope this is helpful. If there is more I can do to assist you here, or if you care to issue guidance/instructions, please call and let me know. (U)



25X1

Attachment:  
As stated

**SECRET**

## ADMINISTRATION POLICY TOWARD "RISK REDUCTION CENTERS"

Executive Summary

Section 1108(a) of the FY85 Defense Authorization Act sponsored by Senators Warner and Nunn expresses the Sense of the Congress that the U.S. should propose to the Soviets the creation of "Risk Reduction Centers" (RRCs) in Washington and Moscow.

Senators Warner and Nunn recently have recommended--both privately and publicly--that the Administration move soon, perhaps this autumn, to raise the idea with the Soviets. At a press conference on July 16, the Senators stated that the President's meeting with Soviet leader Gorbachev would be an opportune occasion for such an initiative. The Senators currently are planning a week-long visit to the USSR beginning around August 23, and a meeting with Soviet leader Gorbachev may be arranged during their stay. This raises the possibility that they may float the RRC idea directly with Gorbachev at that time.

At the working group level, Administration officials have met several times with the Senators and/or their staffs to discuss the concept and assess its feasibility. These discussions have covered possible functions, manning, and locations/support equipment for the RRCs, were they to be established. While there initially appeared to be some congruence of views on how to handle these issues if RRCs were established, it now appears that the Senators and their staffs have different perspectives from those developed by the Administration Working Group regarding the following:

- Functions: If RRCs were established, the Working Group's thinking essentially has been to seek a version of the Administration's 1983 proposal for a Joint Military Communication Link (JMCL) to provide for government-to-government exchange of information in certain well-defined instances. Thus, the Administration Working Group favors limiting--at least initially--the responsibilities of the RRCs to: 1) the exchange of notifications required under existing and future arms control and confidence building measures agreements; 2) administrative and logistical support for any high-level meetings that the two sides might agree--through other channels--to hold at the centers; and 3) annual meetings to review the centers' operations. While the Senators agree with these functions, they have publically suggested that the charter of the RRCs might include or evolve to include certain nuclear-related functions, such as joint planning to deal with nuclear incidents caused by terrorists or third countries.

- Manning: If RRCs were established, the Working Group's thinking has been that policy, operational, and security considerations preclude manning RRCs jointly with nationals of both countries. At most, Embassy officials might be assigned as liaisons to be called

**SECRET**

2.

in if a supplement to direct interchange between the U.S. and Soviet RRCs were required. In contrast, the Senators see possible advantages in eventual joint manning, and they do not want to preclude such a possibility in the future.

The Working Group's concept has been that staffing should be commensurate with the functions assigned to the RRCs. Given the functions acceptable within the Executive Branch, mid-level officials should be adequate. In contrast, because they believe the RRCs should evolve towards broader charters, the Senators seem to favor using more senior officials and perhaps appointing an Ambassador to head the RRC staff.

\* Locations/Support Equipment: If RRCs were established, the Working Group's thinking has been to colocate the U.S. facility with one of the existing crisis management mechanisms (White House, State Operations Center, or National Military Command Center) and to establish a publicly visible "front" office with conference rooms, etc. Existing interagency communications links could then be used, as could existing direct communication facilities with the Soviets. Or, if the Soviets would agree, a new direct communications link that would utilize facsimile and teletype communications could be established in the future. As we have determined that video and voice communications are undesirable, we have eschewed these links. The Senators, however, insist on establishing a new and separate facility, outside of the State Department, the Pentagon, or the White House. This would require that communications links be installed between the selected facility and the above-named organizations. The Senators envision eventual establishment of voice and video communications as well as teletype and facsimile communications between the RRCs.

Each of these issues is developed more fully below. It must be noted, however, that despite the best efforts of Administration officials involved in working level discussions with the Senators and their staffs not to commit the Administration to RRCs and to point out the problem areas in the RRC concept, the Senators appear determined to construe those discussions as indicators of Administration support and have so stated publicly.

### Issues for Decision

The fundamental issues facing the Interagency Group are:  
1) When should we make a decision on the RRC concept? 2) If we choose to make a decision at this time, should we a) embrace the Senators' concept; b) table an Administration alternative "risk reduction" idea; or c) distance the Administration from the idea? Whatever approach it selects, the Administration also must decide how it will implement its decision.

Issue 1: Should the IG decide Administration policy on RRCs now? ✕

Our options are to decide now or to postpone a decision at least until after the Senators' trip to the USSR.

**SECRET**

3.

There are several arguments in favor of postponing--at least for the near term--a Administration decision on RRCs:

- If the Senators raise the RRC concept during their trip, the Soviet response likely will be cool. The Soviets have turned down our more modest JMCL proposal. Moreover, the negotiating history of the recent U.S.-Soviet Common Understanding related to the 1971 Accidents Measures Agreement suggests that Soviets are opposed to any public acknowledgment of even largely symbolic measures related to nuclear terrorism. A Soviet "cold shower" might convince the Senators quietly to shelve their idea or to trim it.
- A decision not to support the RRC idea might be perceived by some as inconsistent with the President's mention, in his May 1985 speech to the European Parliament, of the possibility of an evolution to a "risk reduction mechanism" for rapid communication and exchange of data in times of crisis. Our current position of "studying" the RRC concept is credible in the near term.
- If the Senators eventually can be convinced to accept a more modest concept--i.e., along the lines of the Working Group's thinking--the Administration may find it advantageous to float an initiative at some later date. This could prove useful, for example, in the context of the Reagan-Gorbachev meeting.

There are several arguments, however, in favor a decision now:

- We are in a position, substantively, to make a decision. Further analysis would not measurably improve our understanding of the Senators' idea or possible alternatives.
- We are, in the absence of a formal decision, already being described as supportive of this concept--witness a remark by Senator Nunn at a July 3 press conference in Geneva about having "worked with the Administration on risk reduction concepts." Postponing a decision may reinforce the impression that the Administration endorses the Senators' approach. Again, at their press conference on July 16, the Senators incorrectly stated that their concept does, in fact, enjoy important support within the Administration.
- The Soviets, for substantive or propaganda purposes may, not flatly reject the Senator's proposal. Unless we provide the Senators with some guidance before they leave, we may find that they offer--and the Soviets do not reject--a proposal which we cannot support. In that case, we may have very little maneuvering room vis-a-vis the Senators or the Soviets.

**SECRET**

4.

Decision:      Decide Now \_\_\_\_\_      Defer Decision \_\_\_\_\_

Issue 2: If the Administration decides against postponing a decision, should it support the Senator's RRC concept, develop a more modest alternative, or distance itself from the concept? \*

Discussion: The Administration's interest in maintaining public support--at home and abroad--for its efforts to reduce the risk of nuclear war is best served by putting forward carefully considered proposals that are workable, consistent with U.S. national security requirements, and difficult for the Soviets to dismiss as "insincere posturing." The question is whether the RRC concept meets these criteria. All agencies agree the Senators' ideas, to the extent they have been defined in public and private statements, do not meet these minimum criteria; some agencies believe the alternatives discussed by the Working Group similarly fail to meet our requirements.

A decision to endorse, modify, or reject the Nunn-Warner idea at this time should probably be based on the merits of the proposed RRC functions. Working Group representatives and the Senators have agreed that, if a decision were taken to establish RRCs, they could serve: 1) as the transmittal points for notifications required under existing and future bilateral arms control and confidence building measure agreements and 2) as the location for certain ministerial and high-level military meetings. In addition, they have agreed that the RRCs might hold annual review conferences to assess their operations and to determine if any modifications or expansions are warranted.

In public statements, the Senators additionally have called for the RRCs to undertake functions the Working Group could not support, for example, discussion of and joint planning to deter and deal with terrorist nuclear incidents. (Nunn stated in Geneva that he saw RRCs "as trying to produce agreements in advance to deter (nuclear terrorism) ...and secondly to deal with it if it happens.") While the Senators have emphasized at other times--including in private statements--that the RRCs would not be crisis management centers, some of their recent public statements still leave considerable confusion as to where they would draw the line between planning to avoid nuclear terrorism and actually dealing with it should it occur.

The Working Group has identified several policy implications of the proposed functions.

First, if the Centers were to serve as transmittal points for notifications, the reality is that the Centers would have little to do, since only a few (relatively straightforward) notifications are required under existing bilateral arms control or CBM agree-

**SECRET**

5.

ments and the likelihood of a significant expansion of such notifications in the future probably is small. Since the notification role is very limited, the Working Group considered the possibility of expanding the responsibilities of the U.S. RRC to include analyzing the notifications for the policy community and/or discussing notification discrepancies with the Soviets. While the former function is now done by the intelligence and policy communities, it could be transferred to the RRCs without creating major difficulties. However, the latter function could not be transferred to the RRCs without modification of existing agreements (e.g., on the Standing Consultative Commission (SCC)). Further, it could not be shared with such specialized agencies without unduly complicating the work of these agencies and the process of negotiation with the Soviets.

Second, if the RRCs were to serve as the location for high-level meetings, two questions would arise: which meetings would be held at the RRCs and what role would the RRC staff play. Both the Senators and Administration officials believe that some largely ceremonial ministerial and high-level military meetings could be held at the RRCs. The Senators believe that it also would be appropriate eventually to hold meetings of the SCC and the U.S.-Soviet discussions on nuclear non-proliferation in the RRCs. Since the RRCs are expected to have high visibility, the Executive Branch believes the Senators' preference could undercut our objective (which is shared by the Soviets) to keep the SCC and non-proliferation discussions out of public view.

The Senators have been silent on the question of whether the RRC simply should provide logistical and administrative support for any U.S.-Soviet meetings or be a policy actor, recommending meetings either to the Soviets or within the USG; proposing agendas; and so on. Because the second role would complicate U.S. government policy coordination and impinge on the substantive responsibilities of policy offices, the Executive Branch cannot accept this alternative. However, if the Working Group's recommended alternative were adopted, the RRC staff would have precious little to do.

The third proposed function is to conduct annual meetings to review the RRCs operations and to determine if modifications are in order. This assumes, of course, that the functions assigned to the RRCs are sufficiently complex to make modifications likely after some period of time. If RRCs have only the functions identified by the Working Group, this need is not likely to arise, and any annual meetings of the RRC staffs would have largely a symbolic value.

The possibility of using annual meetings to discuss and reach agreement on prospective functions was also examined. The Senators may, in fact, have this in mind. They cited, as a relevant model, the annual meetings of U.S. and Soviet uniformed military officials to discuss the Incidents at Sea Agreement, which have been used both to clarify existing procedures under that agreement and to



**SECRET**

6.

establish new procedures. However, there is little similarity between the sort of known, avoidable "technical" incidents handled by the Incidents at Sea Agreement, and the more amorphous, contentious, policy-and-intelligence-laden contingency planning that would need to be jointly undertaken were one to seek, for example, agreed understandings to deal with nuclear extortion--which the Senators have suggested as an eventual subject for the RRCs. Most importantly, it is not at all clear that we should be seeking "technical" agreements with the Soviets on nuclear terrorism beyond the Common Understanding to the 1971 Accidents Measures Agreement which we already have signed. To do so probably would require detailed discussion with the Soviets of sensitive information on U.S. nuclear weapons security, nuclear accident contingency planning, and/or nuclear operations. Indeed, concern about this risk was the major reason for the President's decision in 1983 not to seek multilateral agreement which would have committed us to cooperation--vice consultations--on nuclear terrorist incidents. The Working Group believes that, contrary to some public statements by the Senators, we should rule out any evolution of the RRCs toward an institution for joint-planning on nuclear terrorism.

On the other hand, certain new types of agreements to avoid misunderstanding might be feasible. The Administration already has outlined a proposal for a JMCL that might cover, inter alia, U.S.-Soviet agreement to: aid ships/aircraft in distress; notify in the event of the impact of nuclear-powered space objects on land; handle inadvertent intrusion into the air, sea or land limits of the other party.

It is, of course, possible to reach agreements in such areas without an RRC. In the last case cited above, a U.S. delegation led by FAA already has been discussing with Japanese and Soviet representatives, a possible agreement on technical measures to reduce the risk of incidents involving civilian aircraft in the region of the KAL shootdown, possibly including the establishment of direct communications among certain U.S., Soviet, and Japanese air traffic controllers. Moreover, we have already proposed a new government-to-government rapid communications link (the JMCL) which could be used in KAL-type incidents, but the Soviets have turned it down.

As noted previously, the Senators' recent public statements create some confusion as to the RRCs possible role in crisis management. All agencies agree that there is a fundamental problem with using the centers in the crisis management role: they would almost certainly complicate, duplicate, confuse and delay the crisis management process by adding one additional layer to the process. The agencies believe, therefore, that any evolution of the RRCs in that direction should be ruled out.

In summary, with respect to the functions of the RRCs, it appears that those near-term functions which might conceivably be considered acceptable to the Executive Branch are largely symbolic. More ambitious concepts offered by the Senators, however, raise

**SECRET**

7.

serious policy and security risks. We must be mindful that in any further efforts to pursue our more modest ideas with the Senators, their real agenda almost certainly will be to facilitate an evolution toward more ambitious objectives, at least some of which the Administration cannot accept.

- Decisions: a) Support Senators' concept in toto. \_\_\_\_\_ \*  
b) Support only those functions deemed potentially acceptable by the Working Group. \_\_\_\_\_  
c) Distance ourselves from RRC concept. \_\_\_\_\_

If the decision were made to pursue either a) or b), secondary but important decisions must also be made about how such centers would be (1) manned and (2) located and equipped.

(1) With respect to manning: There are two issues:

(a) Whether to leave open the possibility for eventual joint U.S.-Soviet manning of both the centers.

(b) Whether to seek high-level staffing.

(a) The Senators favor establishing the centers in the U.S. and USSR in such a way as to leave open the possibility for joint U.S.-Soviet manning. All the Working Group representatives of the Executive Branch agencies believe that joint manning is both unnecessary to perform the functions which would be acceptable were centers to be established and likely to be counterproductive. Some agencies believe such a manning approach would be inimical to our national interests. The functions--described above--which might be countenanced by the Executive Branch do not require a rapid turnaround or immediate response from the other side. In fact, even for other functions--especially the negotiation of new agreements--periodic meetings would suffice. Only one function, crisis management--which the Working Group found unacceptable--could conceivably require joint manning. In this area, to an extent even greater than with the other functions, joint manning must be regarded as a real liability--not an asset.

Joint manning poses serious security, intelligence and policy risks. There would be no acceptable means of protecting U.S. classified information--some of which might include sensitive intelligence--and ensuring the privacy of internal U.S. communications in a jointly-manned center in Moscow. In addition, even if security and intelligence problems could be solved in the U.S. center--which is doubtful--the solutions would be extremely difficult to negotiate with the Soviets and possibly prohibitively expensive to implement. Finally, should the centers actually come to assume a role in crisis management, flexibility in deciding when to communicate would be difficult to achieve: the centers would provide a

 \*

**SECRET**

8.

formal, established channel for automatic consideration of any crisis--including those in which the Soviets' behavior may be serving to heighten, rather than reduce, tensions. An alternative to joint manning could be the designation of an Embassy POC, or liaison officer, who could be called in those rare instances when face-to-face contact at a level below the Ambassador would be desirable.

Decision:

Accept joint manning. \_\_\_\_\_

Limit contact/on-site coordination to Embassy POC. \_\_\_\_\_

Reject joint manning in any form. \_\_\_\_\_

(b) With respect to staffing of the RRCs, the Senators have proposed a "small, but very capable, high quality" interagency team of military, diplomatic, and intelligence officers. The Senate resolution specifies that the RRC would be headed by an Ambassador who would report through "normal military and political channels." But in the event of an emergency, the Ambassador would have "direct access to (his) nation's highest political authority." There are informal indications, however, that the Senators would not insist--at least at the outset--on making the RRC an ambassadorial post.

The Working Group determined that the U.S. Government cannot afford to tie up high-level substantive personnel if the functions of the RRC were limited to the more modest responsibilities described in the previous section as acceptable to the Executive Branch. On the other hand, if top-notch personnel were not assigned to the RRCs, the RRCs probably could not function effectively were they to evolve in the directions proposed by the Senators.

Decision:

. Assign high-level staff to centers. \_\_\_\_\_

. Make staff selection dependent on near-term functions assigned to centers. \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Location/Equipment: The Senators insist on locating the U.S. center in a freestanding building, publicly designated for this purpose. They also would like eventually to see the RRC provided with state-of-the-art facsimile, teletype, voice, and video communications to the RRC in the USSR. They evidently believe that locating the RRC in a freestanding building would afford maximum political visibility, maximize the likelihood of Soviet acceptance of the RRC concept and simplify security problems if the centers eventually adopt joint manning. The Executive Branch

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

9.

Working Group opposed this approach, noting that it would complicate interagency coordination--even for the relatively simple notifications function--and could require substantial capital outlays to install necessary communications equipment and construct and/or remodel buildings. In addition, this high-visibility approach carries the risk of raising public expectations to a level disproportionate with the RRC's responsibilities as well as the embarrassment of an unused "monument" if the institution collapses.

We have already determined (SecDef Report, 1983, planning for the 1963 Hotline and 1972 upgrade) that with voice and video communications, there is an increased potential for misinterpretation, less opportunity to prepare thoughtful and measured responses to inquiries, and the possibility that the Soviets could develop unique insights through stress analysis of voice and video communications. For these reasons, voice and video capabilities repeatedly have been rejected by the U.S. for the Hotline. Finally, the Working Group assessed that it was unlikely that Soviet reactions will be measurably influenced by the choice of the location of the U.S. RRC.

An alternative would be to limit the RRC's communications capabilities to facsimile/teletype (a la the Hotline), colocate these capabilities with existing crisis communications capabilities (i.e., in the White House Crisis Center, the State Department Operations Center or the National Military Command Center), and establish near-by in the same building a "front office" which could have a reception room, meeting rooms, etc. Such a solution would make maximum use of existing assets and facilitate the integration of the RRCs into the existing crisis planning and management structures, thereby minimizing problems of coordination. Further, this approach almost certainly would cost considerably less than the construction of a new building or extensive remodeling of an existing freestanding facility. On the other hand, it would make joint manning, for all intents and purposes, impossible. It seems the Senators oppose this approach for the last reason.

Decision:

- (a) Separate building. \_\_\_\_\_
- Colocate with existing structure. \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Facsimile/Teletype equipment only. \_\_\_\_\_
- Add voice/video. \_\_\_\_\_

Issue 3: How should the Administration implement its decision?

Finally, the Administration needs to decide how it will implement its preceding decisions. As a practical matter, our options may be limited by the Senators' plans to visit Moscow and likely intention--should the trip occur--to raise the RRC concept with the Soviets.

**SECRET**

10.

A. Should we decide either to postpone decision on whether to pursue the RRC concept or to distance the Administration from it, the Administration will require a game plan that will allow it to achieve its objective without alienating either the Senators or the general public, significant segments of which may be inclined to support the general concept of risk reduction centers and could have difficulty understanding Administration opposition or postponement of action on the concept.

Three alternatives for implementing either of these courses of action are possible:

- (1) We could -- without endorsing the proposal -- suggest that the Senators raise the question with Gorbachev and see if he is seriously interested. The Senators have expressed a willingness to raise issues of interest to the Administration during their visit to the USSR. As previously noted, given Moscow's refusal to consider more modest proposals, such as the JMCL, and its ongoing campaign to portray the U.S. as fundamentally opposed to reducing East-West tensions, the Soviets likely would react coolly to the idea. This might be enough to dampen the Senator's push for early action on this score or, alternatively, seriously to review their own ideas.
- (2) We could request a more detailed proposal from the Senators for another interagency review, stressing the need for more explicit guidelines on appropriate functions. Given their continuing reluctance to address "nuts-and-bolts" issues, such a request might serve to dampen their enthusiasm or at least ease their pressure on the Administration to raise the issue soon with the Soviets. Such a request, however, would not be enough to cause them to abandon their idea or perhaps even to trim it to acceptable dimensions. More likely, they would argue that details need not be worked out now. Finally, public enthusiasm for the concept probably would not be dampened by this approach.
- (3) We could inform the Senators that the Administration has decided to defer consideration of their idea pending some indication of Soviet interest in our outstanding CBM offers. Meanwhile, to demonstrate the Administration's continuing interest in CBMs, we could use an appropriate public forum to highlight our outstanding offers to the Soviets and invite them again to begin a dialogue with us in this area. This approach, however, if handled poorly, risks alienating the Senators and putting us in a public position similar to that which we faced early on when we came out against the nuclear freeze concept.

**SECRET**

11.

B. Should we decide to embrace some formulation of the RRC concept--either the more modest proposal\* or the Senators' concept--we could (1) ask the Senators to raise the idea or (2) raise it independently.

- (1) One option would be let the Senators raise the proposal as their own initiative, with a view toward testing the Soviets' reaction. We presume, however, that the Senators likely will assert (as they have done publicly) that there is high-level Administration interest in the idea.
- (2) A second option is to provide the Senators with some message of USG interest and/or support. Among the possible means of doing so would be: a Presidential letter to Gorbachev; a letter from the Secretary of State to the Soviet Foreign Minister; or some other action (e.g., Embassy demarche or public statement) timed to coincide with the Senators' visit.
- (3) We could independently demarche the Soviets, timing the demarche to coincide with the Senator's visit.

Decisions: Implementing the USG approach.

A. Postpone/Distance USG:

- (1). Suggest Senators raise with Soviets without USG imprimatur
- (2). Seek more detailed proposal from Senators
- (3). Tell Senators we are deferring consideration, putting onus on Soviets to respond to outstanding USG proposals on CMBs

B. Pursue RRC concept

- (1) Suggest Senators raise with Soviets indicating high-level Administration interest
- (2) Give Senators evidence of USG support to present to Soviets (e.g., Presidential letter, letter from Secretary of State)
- (3) Take independent initiative (e.g., Embassy demarche) to coincide with Senators' visit

\* Should we decide to pursue a more modest RRC concept outlined under Issue 2, we should be prepared to explain the reasons for our taking that tack. Some believe, for tactical reasons, we may wish to hold out the possibility of evolution to the more ambitious concept favored by Nunn and Warner over time, as we gain experience.